DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 370 371 FL 022 120

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TITLE Teaching American Culture: An Independent Project for an Intermediate Oral Language Class.
PUB DATE Nov 93
NOTE 47p.; Mater's Thesis, School for International Training, Brattleboro, VT.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; Course Content; *Cultural Education; Educational Strategies; *English (Second Language); *Experiential Learning; Higher Education; *Intensive Language Courses; *North American Culture; Program Design; Second Language Instruction; Summer Programs

ABSTRACT

A plan for teaching American culture in a summer intensive course in English as a Second Language, at the intermediate level and focusing on speaking and listening skills, is detailed. The approach used to design the cultural unit integrates two models for culture education and the experiential learning cycle. The report begins with an explanation of the project to design the unit, including the course context, definition of culture, unit scope and objectives, procedures, and criteria used for selecting appropriate student-centered activities. The second chapter describes the application of one cultural education model (details of which are charted in an appendix) to the first ten days of instruction, based on four aspects of cultural knowledge which are as follows: knowing about, knowing how, knowing why, and knowing oneself. Chapter three explains how the experiential learning cycle was used to organize the unit. Chapters four and five outline the second cultural education model, a culture grid, and its use in planning the last four weeks of instruction. Some of the class activities are described. Contains 19 references. (MSE)

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ED 370 371

SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

TEACHING AMERICAN CULTURE

AN INDEPENDENT PROJECT FOR AN INTERMEDIATE ORAL LANGUAGE CLASS

BY

ELIZABETH ANNETTE ALLEN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

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ABSTRACT

This paper details a design of one plan of action for teaching American culture within the context of an Intermediate Listening/Speaking course at the English Language Institute at the University of Delaware. This paper deals specifically with two cultural matrixes used in designing the course during the intensive summer English language course as well as the application of the Experiential Learning Cycle to that approach to teaching culture. The paper describes the author's background, the context and course, and the scope and objectives of the project. The two frameworks are described and a sample teaching unit within each framework is detailed. To both units the Experiential Learning Cycle is applied and discussed in detail.

PREFACE

I selected this Independent Project because I wanted to experiment with incorporating overt teaching of American culture into a Listening/Speaking Level IV course at the English Language Institute of the University of Delaware. My previous experience teaching American culture had been in the English as a Foreign Language context of Japan conversation classes and the English as a Second Language context of an American Culture class during a two-month internship teaching at Keene High School in Keene, New Hampshire. Dissatisfied with my approach to teaching culture in Japan but pleased and excited about my approach at Keene High School, I decided to make the teaching of culture an integral part of future course designs. A second internship provided an opportunity for experimentation.

Using two models as guides (a Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture and the NAPI/KEPRA Culture Grid as guides), I designed a cultural unit as an aspect of the Listening/Speaking course design. Throughout the course the cultural unit was evaluated and anaylzed and adjustments were made to the original design. I used the Experiential Learning Cycle in assessing my learning and for making generalizations for future teaching of American culture. This independent project details the design, the plan of action, some of the activities, reasons for selecting the activities undertaken, the evaluation process of the unit, and my own learning and generalizations made about teaching of American culture in the future.

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CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In my classrooms in Japan, students would ask such questions as, "Why do Americans have so many guns?" or "Why do Americans have so many divorces?" I was caught between wanting to give my students answers and knowing that I couldn't adequately explain American culture. My knowledge of cultures was strongest in cultures where I had lived and explored on my own--not merely from having someone answer my questions or reading textbooks. Long fascinated by learning of different cultures through travel and due to my English as a Foreign Language teaching experience, I also wanted to explore teaching culture in an English as a Second Language context. During my teaching internship at Keene High School I learned how American Culture could be taught experientially. Excited by the teaching I observed and undertook, I decided to write my Independent Project on teaching an American Culture class. My ideas for teaching culture were challenged and explored through a Teaching Anglophone Culture (TAC) course. My awareness was raised as I explored my assumptions and was exposed to different techniques and matrixes.

The experience I had teaching American Culture in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context left me feeling incomplete as my students had done little exploring on their own. This was due to a large degree on my teaching approach and my inability to guide them in exploration. Other than using US magazine articles, songs and films, I brought few culturally pertinent materials to the class. I taught culture within the context of conversation classes, making no attempt to deal with culture directly unless asked by students to answer questions (on handguns, divorce or any other topic that struck their interest). Also, my approach was very teacher-centered so that when students did ask, I would attempt to answer to the best of my ability. Although I knew that I learned best about culture when I was in a culture, exploring it, living it, and experimenting with the language, I did not know how to help my students make that

experiential leap. How could I facilitate students' exploration of American culture *within* a class? During my internship I saw how that could be done. My mentor teacher, Dr. Germer, guided me as I taught an American History and Culture class to five exchange students. The topics were teacher and student-generated (students listed their interests but the teacher decided which topics would best fit the overall course goals) and my role as teacher varied from informant to guide. In teaching about the Vietnam War, I was more of an informant than guide, while in teaching about American humor, I was more of a guide. Exploration was key to the student's learning of American culture. Homework entailed community research, talking with Americans, making deductions from programs viewed or articles read. For example, during the Vietnam section two guest speakers presented to the class and answered the students' questions--an officer who served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a Green Beret and a refugee who escaped Vietnam as a boat person. Key factors in teaching this course were the amount of time (a full school year) and class size/ambiance (a small, intimate group that was very comfortable discussing together). I liked the experiential nature of this approach with its student-centeredness and the value it placed on culture as the basis for a course. I also liked the idea of valuing the importance of culture by creating a course with culture as its sole focus. I wanted to experiment with this approach in teaching culture but within a different context, teaching a class in American Culture in an eight-week intensive course at the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Delaware. Having culture once again be my subject, using a student-centered approach, and taking the tools I learned from my mentor and my TAC course served as the basis for my original Independent Project. However, instead of the American Culture class at the Univeristy of Delaware, I was assigned a Listening/Speaking Level IV class.

B. The Context and Course

There was no text or set syllabus for the Listening/Speaking Level IV course. Rather, there were general objectives listed that should be met within the eight-week (an

hour and forty-five minutes a day) course. There were no full-time teachers to guide my co-worker (also a summer employee) and me in creating a course design and syllabus. In designing the course, we used the general objectives and asked students what topics they found of interest. Level IV is listed as a high intermediate course and the objectives for the course were as follows:

1. Pronunciation: Individual pronunciation challenges will be identified. Students will practice pronunciation (including stress and intonation) on the phoneme and sentence levels.
2. Fluency/Oral Grammar: Students will be able to communicate with increased fluency individually, in pairs, small groups and in large groups in contextualized situations.
3. Listening: Students will comprehend main ideas and specific details of conversations in academic and social contexts. Students will be able to identify main points of unfamiliar topic areas. Students will be exposed to different regional accents and voices. Students will be able to use intonations as a clue to discerning meaning.
4. Conversational Management Skills: Students will be able to use native-speech conversational management skills in initiating, controlling, maintaining, relinquishing and closing conversations.
5. Academic Skills: Students will be able to take effective notes of native-speed speech on topics for both familiar and unfamiliar material.

Other course requirements were two ten-minute presentations from each student.

The students' interests were varied and two themes ran throughout the brainstorming session and essays on areas of interest. Those were wanting to learn more about American culture and wanting to learn about each other's cultures. The topics they wanted to study ranged from shopping to dating to sports to hobbies to food to family life to.... Students' topics were incorporated into the above program-mandated objectives as the course was designed. Since I wanted to focus on the cultural implications of each topic, I decided to teach the topics using a Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture created by Pat Moran of the Master's of Arts in Teaching Program at the School for International Training. (Moran 1992). I had studied the framework at length in the TAC course . The framework (see Appendix) deals with four culture learning interactions:

1. Culture as Knowing About
2. Culture as Knowing How
3. Culture as Knowing Why
4. Culture as Knowing Oneself

I hoped that by following this framework I could bring a cohesive structure to the hodge-podge of topics that the students wanted to cover and thus honor their interests as well as deal with the cultural implications of the topics they selected.

In the beginning there were eight students from Korea, Japan, and Spain. During the first two weeks eleven more students moved into the class from lower levels and some then switched again to different levels. During that time I did not know how many or which students would be permanently in my class so much time was spent on introductions and recycling material covered previously. From the third week I had a core group of twelve students in the class: four men and eight women. Their ages ranged from seventeen to thirty-one. There were two Koreans, four Spanish, five Japanese and one Turk. The majority were university students who were in Delaware only for the summer whose purpose was to learn English and have fun exploring the United States. Two were businessmen whose companies were paying for courses to improve their workers' English ability because of transfers to US branch offices. Two were University of Delaware graduate students who, depending on their TOEFL scores, would begin coursework in fall 1993. Their governments (Japan and Turkey) had provided scholarship funds for both the English Language Institute and the graduate programs.

The entire class shared an incredible lack of contact with Americans. With the exception of one student who lived with her Spanish aunt and American uncle, the students lived in dormitories with other international students . In this particular residence hall area there were no Americans and the students' main contact with Americans outside of the ELI staff (teachers, tutors, activities staff) was with the dining hall personnel. Yet all of my students expressed a strong desire to get to know American culture and American life. I strongly encouraged them to participate in the language exchange program with interested American students and several did but there weren't enough American participants for each international student. The overall framework for individual participation in this course was one of "sojourner," here for a visit (of varying

lengths for the business people and graduate students). They were curious and respectful, but with little need to fully integrate into American culture. Of the twelve, ten described themselves as very shy and introverted. Initially I thought that they were just trying to describe themselves with adjectives that were unassuming or polite. I quickly realized that the ten were, indeed, very shy. I shifted from spending half the class time in large group discussions to spending seventy-five percent of the time in small group work.

C. Defining Culture

Before writing on my approach to teaching culture in the Listening/Speaking IV course, I would like to define what I mean by "American culture." Obviously, American culture is as diverse as the individuals who populate the country. Within an eight week course (or even academic year of high school) it would be impossible to expose students to the diversity found in *any* culture. I am also acutely aware that I bring to the classroom my own context/framework of what it means to be an American. Depending on the situation, even my discourse for what is typical of American culture changes since my cultural norms for life on fishing vessels in Alaska are in stark contrast to my cultural norms for MAT XXIV at the School for International Training. The context for the cultural exploration my students undertook was that of the academic world of the University of Delaware and the surrounding town of Newark. They were encouraged to seek out cultural informants and the students all selected college-educated business people, tutors at ELI, librarians at the main university library, or American students with whom they did language exchanges. The students selected their own informants and the informants were uniformly middle-class, white Americans. Therefore, the context for American culture explored was even more specific than Newark and the university: it was white middle-class. There are limitations of such a context and it was hoped that field trips and class discussions would offer some variety and balance.

Finally, a note on the use of the word "American." While I respect the desire on many peoples' part to differentiate between "US-American" and "American" (referring to the whole of North America) I use the term "American" to refer specifically to the United States of America. My primary reason for this is my belief that "American" carries a clear linguistic and internationally-recognized reference to the people and culture of the United States of America (just as "Canadian" clearly refers to that of Canada and "Mexican" to Mexico). I hope that I do not offend any reader by my use of "American" versus "US- American."

D.Scope and Objectives

My objectives for the independent project proposal were as follows:

1) To identify what aspects of American culture are appropriate to the context in which I was teaching
2) To teach American Culture within the structure of a Listening/Speaking Level IV course, experimenting with a student-centered approach
3) To identify criteria for selecting appropriate activities for a student-centered approach
4) To implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the chosen activities in my Listening/Speaking class

E. Procedure

During the course of the eight-week session I experimented with two different matrixes in implementing the course design: a Framework for Learning/Teaching Culture and a Culture Grid, NAPI/KEPRA, developed at The Experiment in International Living. (Fantini 1984a). This paper will follow my own experiential learning cycle with the design, plans of action, testing of those plans, lessons learned, and generalizations made for future teaching of American culture. The paper will include an example of one

topic taught within the Framework for Learning/Teaching Culture and one section of the NAPI/KEPRA Culture Grid.

F. Criteria for Selecting Appropriate Activities Within a Student-centered Approach

There are many guidelines to determine whether or not an activity in a classroom is student-centered and different approaches use different guidelines (e.g., Silent Way versus Total Physical Response, etc.). I had a general notion of what I considered student-centered but wanted to identify criteria that would formalize my ideas into a clear guideline. Since the students were adults and the goal was to give them ample opportunity to explore and discover American culture, the following criteria were chosen from Malcom Knowles' The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species as a guide to determine whether an activity was student-centered:

* Formal curriculum development is less valuable than finding out what the learners need to learn.
* Adults need the opportunity to apply and try out learning quickly.
* A climate of openess and respect is helpful in identifying what the learners want and need to learn
* Adults enjoy planning and carrying out their own learning exercises
* Less use is made of transmittal techniques and more of experiential techniques
* Adult readiness-to-learn and teachable moments peak at those points where a learning opportunity is coordinated with a recognition of the need-to-know

(Knowles 1984).

Initially, another area of focus in determining whether or not an activity was student-centered was whether or not the activity was inductive or deductive. At first I was adamant that all the activities must be inductive. However, in working with the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture and understanding the different roles of the teacher in the four stages, I realized that a teacher can inform--give information that will enable and empower and elucidate--and still teach within an approach that is student-centered. An activity need not be inductive to be student-centered. The Cross-Cultural Orientation Guide notes that "the role of the educator's experience can be a significant

resource for adult learning." (Fantini 1984b). In selecting the activities and assessing their effectiveness in the chapters on Experiential Learning Cycle (with both the framework and the grid) the above criteria from Knowles were used as a guide for student-centeredness.

CHAPTER II.
USING THE FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING/TEACHING: A SAMPLE UNIT

The first framework for teaching culture selected was Moran's. This particular framework was selected because I felt it offers a complete approach for students to learn about culture. A unit taught within this framework approaches culture from four dimensions:

Culture as KNOWING ABOUT
This category includes all cultural aspects that consist of information--facts, data, pieces of information, knowledge.
Rationale: Learners need to master information about the culture.

Culture as KNOWING HOW
This category includes cultural aspects that consist of skills--actions, doing, participation, behavior, saying, touching, looking, standing. Direct or simulated participation in the everyday life of the people of the target culture, according to their customs and traditions, using their tools and technology, establishing effective relationships with them.
Rationale: Learners need to be able to adapt and/or integrate into the culture--to say and do things in the manner of the people of the culture. This means changing their behaviors to develop others that are appropriate for the culture.

Culture as KNOWING WHY
This aspect deals with coming to an understanding of the basic values, attitudes and assumptions of the culture--the reasons that underlie or permeate all aspects of the culture. The process of learners' structured inquiry into observations, information and experiences with the culture is a critical dimension of learning another culture.
Rationale: Learners to need to understand the culture on its own terms. The basic values of a culture are an important point of comparison with the values of the culture of the learners. Students need to develop skills in probing, analyzing, explaining the cultural phenomena they encounter.

Culture as KNOWING ONESELF
This aspect deals with the individual learner--his/her values, opinions, feelings, questions, reactions, thoughts and ideas, his/her cultural values. It deals with self-awareness.
Rationale: Learners need to understand themselves and their own culture as a means to understanding, adapting to, or integrating into the culture. It is the learners who decide the extent to which they accept, explore or become part of the culture.

(Moran 1992).

During a brainstorming session on topics that they wanted to cover during the eight weeks, the students expressed strong interest in a unit on shopping. I decided to begin the classwork with that topic and wanted to select student-centered activities that would fit within the above framework. I agreed with Moran in that, "to suggest separate categories for culture is to impose an artificial, simplistic system on a complex entity. Nonetheless the framework is useful in framing the pedagogical challenges and options for teaching culture." (Moran 1992). Using as the criteria for selection that activities fit within the framework and be student-centered, the unit described below was designed. The unit was covered over ten class days with approximately thirty to forty minutes a day dedicated solely to the unit.

A. Culture as Knowing About

I began with a brainstorming session in small culturally mixed groups. Students brainstormed one list with stores they knew of in the United States and another list of stores from their own countries that they had not found in the United States. Groups circulated and commented on each others' lists, noting of similarities and differences not only between shops in their own countries' and the United States, but also between stores and shops found in each other's countries. The next activity was from *Chapter Three* of Great Ideas, *Activity 3.2: Communication Activity: I'm Looking For A.....* (Jones and Kimbrough 1990, 13). Using the lists of American stores that had been generated in the previous activity, students worked in pairs to discover where they would find the list of items from Great Ideas. This was followed by the listening activity from the same chapter, *A Shopping Spree* , in which two Americans talk about their purchases at a local mall and students answered questions about the conversation. The homework assignment (over a three-day weekend) was to go to the Christina Mall, downtown Main Street (a shopping district) and a supermarket and to sit for half an hour where they could unobtrusively observe and take notes on shoppers. *The Observer* from Experiential Language Learning Techniques was used as a basis for the assignment. (Jerald and Clark

1989, 7). Homework was processed in large group discussion (classroom format was desks in a circle).

B. Culture as Knowing How

Using *Chapter Seven, Shopping,* from Culturally Speaking, the focus was on the Knowing How category with students practicing the model dialogues (*Section 1*) as well as working in small groups to answer the *Customs Quiz* in *Section 2, Talking With Salespeople*. (Genzel and Cummings 1986, 107). They worked in pairs and then in a large group to act out the *Now You Do It* of *Section 2*. These were controlled dialogues for students to practice "using correct gestures and body language" as well as correct English to purchase items or request information (Genzel and Cummings 1986, 109). The classroom was then converted into a large 'mall' with visual aids. Some students were store clerks and others were shoppers. Cuisinere rods substituted for relia and half way through the activity (fifty minutes total for the activity) students' roles were switched. To conclude the Knowing How section as well as connect the conversation to another class project we were doing, I did a "How To Return an Item" presentation. Part of the Level IV Listening/Speaking course requirements were two ten-minute presentations: a "How To" and an informational speech. To demonstrate a "How To" speech I presented the five-minute "How to Return a Purchase." Students then critiqued my speech and identified qualities of a good presentation.

As well as their assignment for the "How To" speech for the following week on any topic of their choice, they were then given the homework assignment of purchasing an item (and bringing it with the receipt to class the next day) with the intention of returning it. The next day, one student, a recently arrived Korean businessman (who usually did his homework), did not have his purchased item. He also did not participate in the class discussion as much as usual and when the class was asked how they felt about the assignment, he adamantly responded, "I don't like it." While the role of the teacher in

the Knowing About is that of informant, the role of the teacher in Knowing How is coach or model. Modeling how to return an item was easy; coaching was a bit more challenging.

The other students, while nervous, needed only reassurance and encouragement. The Korean businessman had decided that the assignment was too threatening and he wanted no part of it. I arranged to meet him after class when it became obvious that he needed more time and attention than I could give him in class. He talked at length about what made him upset about the assignment, I asked him what benefits he could see from doing the task (which he had no difficulty doing), and we worked together to come up with different strategies that would make the task less threatening, such as buying an inexpensive item, returning it at a slow part of the shopping day when the clerks are less harried, going with a friend or being accompanied by me. In the end he was willing to attempt the activity and I reassured him that we would practice more roleplays the next day in class. "Returns" were roleplayed several the next day in class and students were assigned the homework of returning their purchases. The following day they came back with their stories of their experiences and discussed in small groups. The Korean businessman was very vocal about his accomplishment and overall the students felt successful with what they had achieved. We had large group closure on the Knowing How and I checked for any remaining questions on the procedure for buying or returning items, vocabulary questions, etc.

C. Culture as Knowing Why

"Here learners engage in actively using their powers of induction, analysis and intuition to draw conclusions about cultural information or experiences. In the framework of Knowing Why, students need to demonstrate an ability to infer, generalize, hypothesize and suspend judgment. Learners interpret and make explanations based on the roleplays, simulations and field experience, comparisons with their own cultures,

ethnography and reflective writing." (Moran 1992). In small groups students discussed questions them based on the "*Analysis*" task of *Section Three* in Culturally Speaking (Genzel and Cummings 1986, 111). The students came together in a large group to synthesize their ideas and share their observations. Examples of the types of questions discussed included:

1) In the United States, "The customer is always right." What does this mean? Do you have a similar saying in your country?
2) How is business different in your country from business in the United States? Are there only specialized stores or are there also department stores that sell many types of merchandise?
3) Are there certain age groups or genders that you noticed at the mall? Downtown? At the supermarket? How are these groups similar or different to shoppers in your country?
4) What are some of the cultural implications of "one-stop shopping"? Do you have something similar in your country?

The discussions, both in small group and large group, were animated. It was challenging at times for me in my role of co-researcher/guide to keep the students aware of the difference between observations and opinions--while at the same time trying to remain unobtrusive and not interrupt the free-flowing conversation(s). Comparisons with their own cultures was a revealing process in raising students' awareness of when they were making judgments. "The customer is always right" offered a good "reality check'" for revealing cultural perspectives when the large group discussion revealed the following from their own cultures:

Japan: "The customer is God."
Korea: "The customer is King."
Spain: "The customer always has a reason."
Turkey: "The customer can be convinced."

Their awareness raised, the students remained more empathetic to the complexity of culture in forming perspectives. I was pleased with many of their observations about American culture which, while based on the shopping experiences/unit, were far reaching in their scope (family life, relationships, and hobbies as well as the more obvious consumerism, materialism, etc.)

D. Culture As Knowing Oneself

Although it was a Listening/Speaking class, students were given a reflective writing assignment, begun in class and to be continued at home. They were to answer the following questions in a paper that would not be corrected or graded:

1) What importance does shopping play in your life?

2) How did it feel to spend an afternoon at the mall? Downtown? At the supermarket?

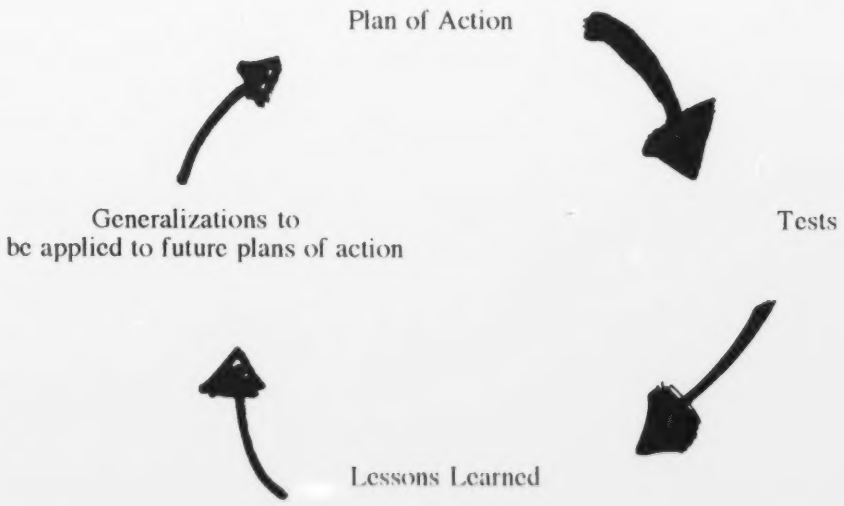
3) Would you choose to spend your free time shopping? Why? Why not?

I decided to have the class work in groups of three to process what they had learned during their writing since at this stage the subject matter is particularly intimate; "the learners themselves are the subject matter in a process of guided self-discovery, as they study their own values and their reactions to those of the culture. They decide whether or not to change." (Moran 1992). I circulated among the four groups and collected their writing. Although all the students were sojourners, there were many different reactions to the concept of adapting and integrating. Because of varying language abilities and speaking styles within the classroom, the Knowing Oneself stage of the framework was the most difficult to facilitate. Some of the students with a more limited English had difficulty expressing themselves and their ideas--both in small group and in their papers. Some of the more "practical" (one student's word) students felt that this step was not really part of learning about America or learning about shopping. I did not feel that this stage in the framework was as successful for the class as a whole as the other three had been. At first I thought that perhaps it was beyond the language abilities and therefore was too difficult, but in the end decided that I had not been adept at making the transition to this next stage for the four students who seemed not to understand or benefit from this stage.

CHAPTER III.
APPLYING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE WITH THE FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING/TEACHING CULTURE

The plan of action and tests for the shopping unit were detailed in Chapter I. My plan of action was created using the Framework for Learning/Teaching Culture and the student-generated topic of shopping. To determine the effectiveness of the unit, the activities and overall unit needed to be evaluated in relationship to the project objectives. Students completed a written evaluation on the unit, I spoke with students in and outside of class, and I reviewed my teaching journal. I applied David Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle to the course design and objectives and, from my "lessons learned," altered the course design to create a new plan of action. (Kolb 1976).

Figure 1. The Experiential Learning Cycle



(Kolb 1976).

The first objective ("To identify what aspects of American culture are appropriate to the context") had been met with the plan of action. The unit on shopping was appropriate to the context because the students, new to the country, needed to know the *how* and *what* of shopping. They requested the topic and in their feedback said how useful they found the activities geared to those stages of the framework. I felt that the activities throughout the unit met the criteria for a student-centered approach as detailed in the introduction of this paper. While the role of the teacher in the Knowing About stage is that of "informant," activities in that section of the unit were primarily inductive and all were student-centered, so the second and third objectives had been met ("To teach culture within a student-centered approach and to select activities based on criteria for student-centered learning"). During the Knowing Why discussion, there were times when I was very tempted to step in and explain or defend the target culture. At that point, however, informing would not have been student-centered. Staying grounded in my commitment to student-centered teaching enabled me to find the patience to interject only and to therefore remain in the role of guide.

The generalizations that I made from my assessment of the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture was that it was an effective model to follow if I had more time and if my students' commands of English were within closer range of each other. One learning from use of the Framework that was of incredible value for me was my heightened awareness of the teacher's role, particulary how the teacher's role must change and yet remain student-centered. Going through each of the four stages and analyzing my teaching in journal writing kept me constantly aware of my role. I focused on how I could best be of service to my students. I valued the Knowing Why stage because it gave the students a forum for hypothesis and practice in withholding judgment. Their curiosity was tempered by sensitivity. I determined that in the next plan of action I would continue to be aware of the changing roles as teacher and that opportunities would

be offered to process cultural discoveries within the context of Culture as Knowing Why and Culture as Knowing Oneself.

What was of most concern to me as well as to my students (from their feedback) was the amount of time spent on the unit. With only thirty to forty minutes a day to spend on the activities and with students having drastically varying abilities in English, the unit had taken two weeks--longer than anticipated. Four weeks of teaching time remained (the final eighth week of the course was to be spent doing final student presentations and semester-end TOEFL and Michigan tests) and I felt that the students needed a "bigger picture." Continuing with the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture would have allowed for two more aspects of American culture to be covered in depth. Instead, I wanted to expose my students to a wider variety of their new community's culture and decided to use the NAPI/KEPRA Culture Grid as a guide in selecting areas of exploration for the "whole picture." Focused on my lessons learned and generalizations made, I created a new plan of action which is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.
USING A CULTURE GRID (NAPI/KEPRA)

In this chapter I will briefly describe the NAPI/KEPRA grid, show how I used it in planning the cultural segment of the remaining four weeks of the course, discuss the homework and class structure for those four weeks, and give an in-depth description of one of the grid sections covered in class.

A. The Culture Grid

The NAPI/KEPRA schema is a "systematic approach to community exploration" with nine basic areas of exploration. These areas provide the acronym for NAPI/KEPRA:

N-Natural Environment
A-Artifacts
P-People
I-Information

K-Kinship
E-Economy
P-Politics
R-Religion
A-Associations (Fantini 1984a, 108-109)

In grid form it appears as:

	Kinship	Economy	Politics	Religion	Associations
Natural Environment					
Artifacts					
People					
Information					

However, the information in this chapter is not organizeded on the above, interactive grid framework. For clarity, the "pigeon hole" approach below has been used. This format is from Beyond the Language Classroom and allows for easy reading. (Fantini 1984a, 108-109).

NAPI/KEPRA

Natural Environment (the physical surroundings)	Artifacts (all items created by people)
People	Information (how information is passed on/communication)
Kinship (how families are organized)	Economy (production, acquisition, and consumption of goods)
Politics	Religion
Associations (social organization/process)	

B. Course Design

For the plan of action in the remaining four weeks of the cultural segment of the course, I attempted to balance topics that would fit into the different grid areas so that students would benefit from a broad cultural perspective. Fortunately this was not difficult because the original list of student-generated topics of interest was fairly eclectic. With the exceptions of Politics and Information, there were topics that fit easily into most of the grid sections. In planning the remainder of the course, I organized the number of activities per grid section in correlation to how much interest had been expressed by the majority of the students in that particular area as well as activities that I felt would allow for needed cultural exploration--activities such as *Mapping it Out* (Natural Environment) and the Telephone Directory Yellow Pages assignment (Information). With the exception of Politics, I felt that there was ample student interest in each grid area. For Politics , I attempted to create interest in a class visit to the Capitol and/or White House during an all-school field trip to Washington, DC; however, the students were adamant about their very different, desired itineraries. Since the purpose of the school field trip was to provide the students with a day off, I felt it inappropriate to push where there was an obvious lack of interest.

Below are the activities that were planned and completed in the remaining four weeks of the course: while thirty to forty minutes per day was the norm, several full class sessions (an hour and forty five minutes) were used for the Kinship, Natural Environment and Religion segments of the grid.

NAPI/KEPRA GRID

Natural Environment **(the physical surroundings)** *Observation*, ELTT p. 7* *Home*, CATT p. 18** *Mapping it Out*, ELTT p. 26 *Sign Language*, ELTT p. 21 **(also Information)** Restaurant Observation (based on teacher experience with ethnographic studies) **(also People)** Food Unit: Face the Nation, p. Jimmy Buffet, "Cheeseburger in Paradise" Student-created food/eating habit surveys--each student polled ten Americans Brunch at a local restaurant Sharing Favorite recipes	**Artifacts** **(all items created by people)** *Artifacts*, CATT p. 15 (in any home students had visited during their stay) Teacher-generated US Flag Observation Activity Shopping Unit carryover: stores found in America versus those in students' cultures. Physical description of malls and stores Physical description of places of worship
People Dating & Marriage Unit: Culturally Speaking, *Chapter IV*. **(also People and Kinship Sections of the grid.)** *Home*, CATT. p.18 **(also Environment & Kinship)**	**Information** **(how information is passed on/ communication)** Telephone Directory Yellow Pages assignme Students required to call Amtrak, Greyhound, and various airlines for travel information from Newark, DE to Athens, OH *Sign Language*, ELTT p. 21
Kinship **(how families are organized)** Dating & Marriage Unit: Culturally Speaking, *Chapter IV* *Family Trees*, CATT, p. 15 Family Vocabulary, ESL Miscellany, p. 66 Film: "Steel Magnolias"	**Economy** **(production, acquisition and consumption of goods)** Shopping Unit (covered extensively in Chapter I of this paper) Bargaining in the USA: Mosaics,
Politics Excursions to places of political significance during an all-school field trip to Washington, DC canceled due to a severe lack of student interest	**Religion** A Place of Worship: attendance to a service at a place of worship

Associations
(social organizations/process)
The US school system : Culturally Speaking, *Chapter II*

*Experiential Language Teaching Techniques (ELTT)
**Cultural Awareness Teaching Techniques (CATT)

C. Homework and Class Structure

Following the principles for andragogy detailed in the Cross-Cultural Orientation Guide edited by Alvino Fantini, I knew that the students were "generally autonomous and self-directed; [they were] usually able to function well with minimal external control." (Fantini 1984b). I wanted to use a model of learning that would allow them to "act, describe and explore." (Fantini 1984b). Since the nature of cultural discovery is one of exploration I planned homework assignments which would then dovetail into activities that would allow for further discovery through group discussion.

The basic class structure for the NAPI/KEPRA activities were the homework assignments followed by in-class processing of the students' discoveries from their exploration and "research." Small group processing varied between groups of three or four with occasional pair work and/or large group work. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the large group format was not the most effective forum for class discussion because of the number of shy students who were not comfortable in that setting. Inevitably, the two vocal, extroverted students would dominate those large group discussions, regardless of how much I tried to equalize participation by calling on other individuals. In order to have students gain a sense of the discoveries from students in other small groups, students rotated from group-to-group and then reported back to their initial group. This seemed to ensure that the students had an idea of what the class as a whole had learned.

As an example of this homework and classwork structure, I will describe the *Sign Language* activity from the Experiential Language Teaching Techniques in the Information and Natural Environment sections of the grid. The homework task and purpose of the activity were explained; students were to walk down Main Street or go to the business district and "collect" at least ten signs (drawing them). The purpose was twofold: "Getting around can be greatly facilitated if one understands the written

messages that are available" and letting the students discover what items, ideas, concepts Americans advertised, explained, instructed with signs. (Jerald and Clark 1989, 21-23). Students were divided into groups and each group was responsible for a different category of signs. Then, they were given ten minutes to plan strategies for their homework (who would go where, what they would be looking for, etc.) Students were given butcher block paper on which to draw their signs. The next day students returned to the same groups, shared their signs, and discussed their learning. The class was then regrouped; new groups consisted of members from each different sign category so that students could learn about signs from each of the various categories. To finish, the butcher block sheets were hung around the room and everyone walked around asking questions and commenting. The amount of class time used for ***Sign Language*** was as follows: the first day twenty minutes for presentation of the assignment and allow for small group strategy work and the second day forty minutes for discussion, questions, and comments. Students did the "research" independently but through group processing discovered more information and shared cultural insights.

D. An Example of a Unit Taught within the Culture Grid: Natural Environment

I will give a brief overview of one grid section, Natural Environment. The activities of the section will be described and why they were chosen will be discussed. Since the course focused on listening and speaking, any talking met the general, overall class description/requirement. .Attention will be called to an activity's objectives only if it was targeted for a two-fold purpose; for example, a culture and a listening comprehension cloze exercise. I will mention how certain activities crossed over to other sections of the grid. The amount of class time spent on the grid section will be detailed briefly. Unlike People, Kinship and Religion, which were very specifically focused on dating, marriage, family and worship, the Natural Environment activities selected were wide-ranging. This was to encourage the students to explore the town physically and to practice observation skills they would use later--particularly in the Religion section.

Natural Environment
(the physical surroundings)
Observation, ELTT p. 7*
Home, CATT p. 18**
Mapping it Out, ELTT p. 26
Sign Language, ELTT p. 21 **(also Information)**
Restaurant Observation (based on teacher experience with ethnographic studies) **(also People)**
Food Unit: Face the Nation, p.
Jimmy Buffet, "Cheeseburger in Paradise"
Student-created food/eating habit surveys--each student polled ten Americans
Brunch at a local restaurant
Sharing Favorite recipes

The Natural Environment category included an extensive focus on food--a topic that everyone wanted to cover. Half of the class "How To" speeches had been on cooking and we had two parties outside of class during the course of the semester --with everyone excited about preparing and trying foods from the different cultures. The prevailing class attitude was that the food in the USA was atrocious, fatty, inedible and boring. Since all but one of the students were living in dormitories (and, therefore, eating dining hall food), I wanted to provide some balance to their perspectives on American food, as well as give them ample opportunities to share their own national cuisines. Also, students needed extensive practice listening to native-speed speech and two of the food activities (the radio show with its workbook activities and cloze exercizes with the song) allowed the combination of listening comprehension objectives with culture objectives. In the survey polls students were required to speak with Americans who, it is assumed, spoke at native-speed (perhaps a little slower out of politeness).

The food sub-unit with a "Morning Edition" radio broadcast from *Chapter 1* in Face the Nation. *Chapter 1*, *The Last Innocent Meal*, dealt with American breakfasts--specifically, rolled oats. I brought homemade oatmeal to class for sampling and explained how my father had been in charge of preparing breakfasts when my sisters and

I were growing up and how we ate oatmeal every morning for four years (American culture shared--both parents with child-rearing responsibilities, the family taking meals together, etc.). Unfortunately, the oatmeal sample only reinforced their rather negative stereotypes of American food. This activity took twenty-five minutes.

We practiced dialogues between "waiters" and "patrons" with menus from local restaurants and then went to a local health-food restaurant for brunch. The students thought that the food served there was better than the breakfasts they had experienced thus far and I guided the discussion into the Culture as Knowing Why and Knowing Oneself realms. In the casual setting of the restaurant, the large group discussion was much more balanced than in the classroom: relaxed, sipping coffee, people shared more easily. This activity took an entire one hour and forty-five minute class session.

After the restaurant and with the realization that not all Americans eat fast food, canned goods, and their body weight in grease, the students created four different surveys. In small groups, they created surveys of at least five questions which they had to ask at least ten Americans. One group covered health food, one group covered favorite foods, and two groups covered typical food and meals (with such questions as: Who cooks in your family? How often do you eat together as a family? What are some typical dinners/lunches/breakfasts in your home?, etc.) Creating the surveys took thirty minutes. They had a weekend to complete their polling and on Monday they came together in their original groups to collate and organize their findings (forty minutes). On Tuesday they were organized into four new groups with a member from each original group. They shared their discoveries (fifty minutes). We then discussed their findings in large group and went into Culture as Knowing Why and Knowing Oneself. The typical foods list included cheeseburgers, which made for a nice segue to the next activity, a listening activity of Jimmy Buffet's "Cheeseburger in Paradise" with cloze exercises.

The students always wanted to listen to music and watch movies and as long as the songs could serve a purpose as well as be fun, I was willing to spend class time on

popular music. The one film we watched, "Steel Magnolias," tied together the People and Kinship grid sections very well. I prepared specific listening comprehension and non-verbal communication worksheets to accompany the film. For music, "Cheeseburgers in Paradise" was not only a good listening activity, it was quite a bit of fun. It became a "speaking" activity as students were each given a line in the series ("I like mine with lettuce and tomato," "I like mine with....") to "sing" out when Buffet sang that line. The unit ended with the listening activity "Telephone" but instead of passing a whispered secret students had to pass a favorite recipe. The convoluted end result of the recipes was then compared, with much laughter, to the original. The original recipes were handed in and copies made so that each student left the summer session with their own class recipe book. My recipe for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches was about as popular as my oatmeal recipe.

The students had been given an *Observation* task from the Experiential Language Teaching Techniques during the Shopping Unit and had observed Main Street and the Cristiana Mall. I altered the observation task to more closely match an ethnographic study and assigned students to observe and study a certain restaurant over a period of time. The restaurants were organized into four categories: fast food, family, mid-price range ($12.00-18.00 an entree) and cafe/coffee shop. Students were assigned the task of observing not only the people (who sat with whom?, did they talk during the meals?, how did people behave towards the waiters/waitresses? etc.) but also the physical environment (plants, music, smells, sounds, etc.). The students had to observe three times for thirty minutes each time (this was assigned over a three day weekend). The businessmen volunteered for the mid-range restaurant. From feedback, however, I learned that this was the most threatening assignment I had given. It was agreed that they could write down notes later at home in their own languages rather than be seen taking notes in the restaurant and this made the assignment more approachable. On Tuesday the students met in the original groups (same type of restaurant) and processed the

assignment (forty minutes). On Wednesday students met in mixed groups (different types of restaurants) and then came back to the original groups to share learning (fifty minutes)

The activity actually fell into two other grid sections: Artifacts (as students realized that Colonel Sanders as well as the decorative art in the cafe had special significance) and People (watching families interact over a dinner table was revealing for students who ate only with other international students in the dining hall). The purpose of the restaurant ethnography was to make students aware of how people interact in a public setting and to hone the students' observation skills. In the large group format that closed the restaurant task, the students were encouraged to explore the cultural filters through which they observed events. There was an excellent example that led to a lively discussion. A Japanese and a Spanish student were at the family restaurant at the same time on Saturday. They both observed an American family: parents, their five year-old (or so) son, and grandparents (neither student could determine if the older couple was the paternal or maternal grandparent but they were sure the couple was a set of grandparents). The Japanese student remarked at how strict and stern the American parents were--always telling their son to behave and be quiet. The Spanish student was appalled at how lax the American family was in discipline--she thought the child was ill-behaved and should have been more severely reprimanded (after all, this was a public place and the child was loud). During the discussion, I encouraged all the students to reflect on when they were making observations and when they were making judgments; again, working in the area of Knowing Why and Knowing Oneself. While there had been quite a bit of discontent when the assignment was given, the end result was very positive in that the discussions were animated and later course evaluations revealed that, while not entirely enjoyable, the task was educational.

The restaurant observation and *Home* activity both made the transition from Natural Environment to the People and Kinship grid section very easy. The purpose of

the *Home* assignment was to "discover and compare the different ways people organize and use one of man's basic needs: shelter." (Gaston 1992, 18). Students had to draw on butcher block paper a floor plan of their homes in their own countries and also a floor plan of a home they had visited in Newark. For the students for whom this was not possible (i.e., they had not been in an American home) I provided floor plans of other teachers' homes (my co-workers graciously volunteered to draw their floor plans). The class broke up into groups of three and compared the similarities and differences among the floor plans. All the floor plans were hung around the room and students circulated, asking questions and explaining. This part of the task took approximately thirty minutes and the next day students spent another thirty minutes interpreting what the floor plans might mean in regards to the concepts of privacy, personal space, family relationships, family duties, etc.

The purpose for the *Mapping it Out* assignment was to allow students the opportunity to "acquaint themselves with the town" and to get them off-campus and exploring. (Jerald and Clark 1989, 26-27). I did this and the *Sign Language* assignment early in the unit and the maps remained on the walls, serving as wonderful references in the search for restaurants for the ethnographic study. I have detailed the *Sign Language* task of the Natural Environment grid in my paper under Homework and Class Structure. (Jerald and Clark 1989, 18-19). Both assignments allowed for nonthreatening exploration and were therefore done early in the unit.

Throughout the Natural Environment grid work the students were encouraged to compare discoveries of the target culture with cultural norms of their own countries. The students had as a clearly-stated goal from the first week's brainstorming session a desire to learn more about each others' cultures. During the course they did not hesitate to ask each other, "Well, how is it done in Japan?" or "What is it like in Spain?" or "What do you do in Turkey?" As stated, when appropriate and time permitting, there were many opportunities to use the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture to encourage students

to go into the realms of Culture as Knowing Why and Culture as Knowing Oneself in discussions.

CHAPTER V.
APPLYING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE WITH THE CULTURE GRID

In this chapter I will once again follow the Experiential Learning Cycle to assess my own learning and to synthesize generalizations for future plans of action in teaching American culture. First I will assess how well the four project objectives were met with the activities selected and then I will detail my lessons learned and generalizations for future use.

I felt that the Cultural Grid not only enabled me to meet my first objective ("To identify what aspects of American culture are appropriate to the context which I was teaching"), but actually "liberated" me--the grid was an exellent guide in making appropriate selections. By using the grid I felt comfortable in putting together the "puzzle" of American culture into a cohesive, unified "whole" picture from the many "pieces"--the list my students had brainstormed the first week . My students had an eclectic list of interests and the Cultural Grid served as a guide in unifying the different "pieces" into an organized "whole." By selecting activities within each section of the grid that also matched the students' master-list, it was possible to put together a four-week plan of activities that offered balance and insight into the different aspects of the target culture.

With the grid, the activities selected from the students' interest list very clearly met the student-centered criteria of my second and third project objectives: "To teach American culture within structure of a Listening/Speaking Level IV course, experimenting with a student-centered approach" and "To identify criteria in selecting appropriate activities for a student-centered approach."

"Adults need opportunities to identify the competency requirements of their occupational and social roles. Adults' readiness-to-learn and teachable moments peak at those points where a learning opportunity is coordinated with a recognition of a need to

know." (Knowles 1984, 77). The students, by listing their interests, had identified areas they wanted to explore and their interest in the activities (learning opportunities) was sustained. Their self-motivation was high due to the amount of student initiative. My control as teacher was in selecting activities which fell into the "need to know" range.

However, it should be noted that in some ways, the second objective was not altogether met in that my second objective was to teach American Culture *within the structure* of a Listening/Speaking course. Since I did not meet all five of the *course* goals I did not feel I was effective in meeting my second *project* goal. This was not the fault of the Cultural Grid obviously, but rather the fault of the teacher. I did not meet all of my course objectives due, in part, to the fact that the students very clearly enjoyed the cultural activities. It was difficult to cut off an activity that was the source of much excitement and discussion and, because it was difficult, I often failed to do so. Lesson plans had pre-scribed time limits but often those were disregarded when discussions were animated. While the activities offered students ample opportunity to speak and listen (particularly in small groups), the activities did not facilitate my students' achieving the Academic Skills course objective ("Students will be able to take effective notes of native-speed speech on topics for both familiar and unfamiliar material") or the Pronunciation objective, as these two areas of focus seemed to be the ones dropped most frequently from the daily agendas when there was failure to maintain the pre-set time limit of the cultural activities/discussions. While student evaluations revealed that most students did not mind this, I felt dissatisfied.

At the end of the semester the students were given two written evaluations to complete. One was a self-assessment of their learning (how well they felt they met the course objectives) and an assessment of the course and teacher. This assessment was anonymous and administered uniformly throughout the ELI with the same evaluation form for every class and teacher. I created another evaluation to determine how educational and fun the class activities had been so that the effectiveness of the plan of

activities could be assessed. This was also anonymous. Almost all of the class activities (with the cultural activities being the most varied and numerous) were evaluated on the basis of "educational" and "fun" with a rating of one to five for each category (1 being "not at all" to 5 "being very much so"). The fourth objective, therefore, was met: "To implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the chosen activities in my Listening/Speaking class." Evaluations of activities took other forms as well, such as on-going feedback from students and journal observations.

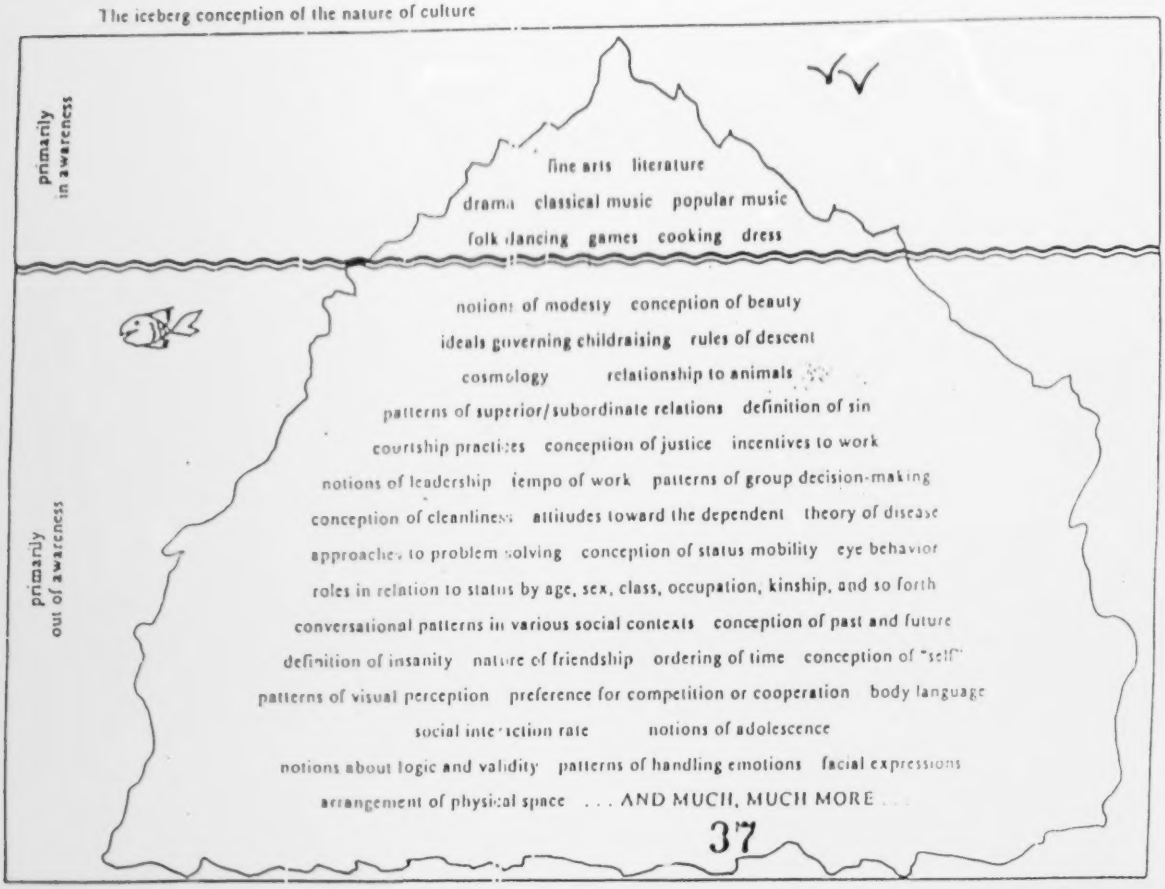
Through conversations with students in and outside of class during the course of the semester I was also able to gage the effectiveness of activities. Observations from my teaching journal also facilitated the evaluation process. Feedback from the students before embarking on the Restaurant Observation task is a clear example of the first--the students were very vocal about not being comfortable with the assignment and it was altered somewhat to make it more approachable. The following observations from my journal are an example of the second form of evaluation:

> 8/5/93 We watched "Steel Magnolias" yesterday--for the first forty-five minutes I kept pausing the film to make sure everyone understood the dialogue (I was mostly worried about Students A, B, and C). After I paused the fourth time they told me to knock it off--they were doing just fine. I still wasn't sure but knew the test would come today when they had to get into small groups to discuss the worksheets. To my amazement, the conversations flowed--when I checked from group to group they were on task and animated. I was pleasantly surprised at how many of their observations were right on and how well they answered the questions. Student X kept asking student Z about what family life was like in Turkey. When they were still on Part III after thirty minutes (Parts IV & V not yet touched) I asked if they wanted to finish or move on to the next task [sentence stress work]. They were very vocal about wanting to stay in small group. We ended up using an hour on the task because we came back to big group and there were some lingering questions from the movie that needed clarification (Students B, Y, and Z). I should have cut off after Part III but there's no class tomorrow [school field trip to the beach] and I want to start the Religion unit on Monday.

I knew that the film was a popular activity and that the students not only enjoyed the discussions following the viewing, but were learning from them; however, for the sake of other course objectives I should have ended the activity after thirty minutes since we had spent the full class time the day before on the cultural activity.

A major learning for me in using the NAPI/KEPRA was that my students do not always share my concept of what "culture" encompasses. In the shopping unit, I never listed the activities as "culture unit" on the daily objective list (a list of objectives/activities are written on the board each class and the first few minutes of class is spent letting the students know what will be covered during the lesson that day). Much to the astonishment of my students, during the NAPI/KEPRA culture grid I referred to activities as "cultural activities." One student was adamant that what we were studying--family, marriage, food--was not *real* culture. If the class wanted to know about the culture of his country, he assured us that he would gladly bring in pictures of great art and architecture from his country. Wanting to illustrate my concept (that culture is complex and often "beyond conscious awareness") and, therefore, to validate the cultural exploration assigned, I used the "iceberg chart" from Robert Kohls' Survival Kit for Overseas Living. (Kohls 1984).

Figure 2.


The iceberg conception of the nature of culture
primarily in awareness
fine arts literature
drama classical music popular music
folk dancing games cooking dress
primarily out of awareness
notions of modesty conception of beauty
ideals governing childraising rules of descent
cosmology relationship to animals
patterns of superior/subordinate relations definition of sin
courtship practices conception of justice incentives to work
notions of leadership tempo of work patterns of group decision-making
conception of cleanliness attitudes toward the dependent theory of disease
approaches to problem solving conception of status mobility eye behavior
roles in relation to status by age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, and so forth
conversational patterns in various social contexts conception of past and future
definition of insanity nature of friendship ordering of time conception of "self"
patterns of visual perception preference for competition or cooperation body language
social interaction rate notions of adolescence
notions about logic and validity patterns of handling emotions facial expressions
arrangement of physical space . . . AND MUCH, MUCH MORE . . .

Just as nine-tenths of an iceberg is out of sight (below the water line), so is nine-tenths of culture out of conscious awareness. The out-of-awareness part of culture has been termed "deep culture."

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My students understood the illustration and, with the exception of the one student (who later did his second class presentation on "Art and Architecture From My Country") saw the "cultural" validity of the activities assigned and discussed. In future plans of action I will be careful to preface teaching culture with a session on Kohl's "cultural iceberg" and come to a clear class understanding of the overall purpose of doing a unit on culture within a Listening/Speaking class.

Another lesson learned and generalization made for future plans of action is the need to set time limits and adhere to them so that all the course objectives can have class time devoted to them. I have to be more realistic in setting appropriate time frames for activities. I never seemed to budget enough time, always underestimating the amount of time an activity would take. Hopefully, with experience, I will become more adept at estimating time requirements and more disciplined in ending activities when the time allotted is over (regardless of how much fun the students and I are having). My personal goal is to have every section of a class be as fun and interesting as the cultural section so that making the transition to the next activity is not resisted but welcomed.

One element of working with the NAPI/KEPRA grid that I truly value and found empowering for me as a new teacher was the feeling of control that I had. A firm believer in the balance of teacher control-student initiative, I had felt a little panicked after teaching the shopping unit with the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture. I was worried that as a class we had taken so much time with one topic: how could I be assured that my students would get the "whole picture?", what would guide me in making insightful selections for areas of exploration? I like to have my entire class agenda planned out in advance--not go two weeks by two weeks, unit to unit. I like to have a clear vision of what I see the students learning over the course of the class and using the NAPI/KEPRA Culture Grid gave me the tools I needed to rough draft where I saw the class going over the next four weeks. The grid sections allowed me to make what I felt were insightful selections for cultural exploration.

A question I remain with is one of teacher control-student initiative in teaching with the grid. To get the "whole" picture we needed, I felt, to do at least one activity in the Politics grid section. My students were not at all interested in politics and were assertive in saying so. Teacher control--should I have done an activity in this section regardless of the lack of student interest (initiative)? In retrospect I think that I should have but I am not altogether sure. Politics is a crucial "piece" of the cultural "puzzle" and I felt I was doing my students a disservice by not covering it. Yet it was easy to let the issue drop because of limited time and other course objectives that needed attention. I am sure that this issue of teacher control/student initiative will arise again in the future.

I was able to incorporate my learning from the Framework of Teaching/Learning Culture into my use of a Culture Grid. My awareness of the different roles of the teacher, made so clear in teaching the different areas of the Framework, kept me focused in the many different activities done in the grid. I was constantly asking myself, "How can I best be of service to my students? What role does this discussion/activity/process require of me now?" Because of the framework I also had the practice and teaching "tools" to encourage my students to look at culture as Knowing Why and Knowing Oneself. There were many opportunities to challenge students to withhold judgment, to explore their own cultural filters, to search beyond the pat answers and delve into Knowing Oneself. The students were very good about listening to and learning from each other. They asked about each others' cultures and their curiosity was sincere. Because I knew the students so well and the students knew each other so well, I could come to a small group, listen for awhile, and ask a few key questions--and then move on to the next group, knowing that the small group would work together to discover their own answers, working together.

CHAPTER VI.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Combining the positive aspects of both the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture and the Culture Grid has enabled me to create an approach to teaching culture that I find both rewarding and effective. The diversity that the Culture Grid allows and the depth that the Framework encourages can be unified to form an approach that can be as varied as it is enlightening. Both matrixes allow for a student-centered approach to teaching culture--as long as the selection of each activity falls within the criteria for "student-centered."

This experience of teaching American culture allowed me to experiment, explore, and create my own approach to teaching culture. Taking what I had learned from my internship at Keene High School and from the Teaching Anglophone Culture course at the School for International Training, experimenting with the Framework for Teaching/Learning Culture and the Culture Grid, and focusing on my differing roles as a teacher all came together as I integrated them into my own approach. I was satisfied with what I achieved but not comfortable. I see where I can improve, what I will do differently next time, how I will present some activities so that they will be less threatening or more challenging. What I am glad for is the solid base that I have established for teaching culture. Excited by this experience, I am currently experimenting with teaching culture within my Advanced Core class, an academic preparatory class with a focus on grammar, reading comprehension, and writing. Had I not had the opportunity and forum for experimentation--and had I not applied the Experiential Learning Cycle in doing a self-assessment of my plan of action, I doubt I would feel so comfortable (or have even attempted) in my current experimentation.

I was glad, too, for the structured opportunity to observe and analyze myself in my second attempt at student-centered teaching (the first being my internship). The teaching journal was an excellent tool for observation and evaluation but even more

significant was on-going student feedback. During my first internship I had felt threatened and nervous by the concept of on-going student feedback. I was much more comfortable with "end of course" feedback. At the end of that internship, I identified "to encourage and elicit student feedback *throughout* the course" as a personal goal for future teaching. Seeking out feedback from my twelve Listening/Speaking students was a personal risk for me, but one that was amply rewarded as my learning was significant. And since I was requiring my students to risk--to go out of their comfort zones on several activities (the return of a purchased item, the religious service, the ethnography, the Yellow Pages assignment, etc.), it seemed only fair and balanced that I also be willing to risk and stretch beyond my comfort zone.

By becoming specific on what I considered were the criteria for "student-centered" activities and focusing on the roles of the teacher, I was able to gain the necessary insight to check and control my often exuberant overparticipation in discussions and activities. By being clear on what I wanted to achieve and the role that was necessary to achieve it, I felt more in control as a teacher. Even though considerably less class time is focused on me now than in my Japanese classrooms, I feel much more in control of my classes. This was true not only in the cultural segment of the course but also in the other course objectives/segments.

In the end evaluation of this experiment of teaching American culture within the context of a Listening/Speaking class, I was left to answer the question that I raised in the introduction: Did I facilitate my students' exploration of American culture *within* the class? Did I give them the opportunities to explore the culture and experiment with the language? Overall, I felt that I had. One student's *Thank You* card summed up in a roundabout (but to me, endearing) English what others had expressed in their feedback, "You made me go out to see things I should see but sometimes, usually wouldn't see. But I was very happy you made me see."

APPENDIX

A Framework for Learning/Teaching Culture and Foreign Languages

Patrick Moran School for International Training MAT Program 1993

The grid below illustrates pedagogical applications of the four culture learning interactions (with examples from French culture). Language lessons can address these interactions separately, or in various combinations.

	Nature of Content	Learning Objectives	Techniques/Activities	Notes
Knowing About *getting information*	Information *-What is the capital of France?* *-Food plays an important role in French life.*	Demonstrate a mastery of the information	Cultural readings Films/Videotapes Recordings Realia (cultural artifacts) Personal anecdotes	*This is how culture is traditionally taught. Giving students information and asking them to show that they know it.* ***Teacher Role: Informant***
Knowing How *developing behaviors*	Skills *-Ordering a meal in a restaurant.* *-Carrying out French table manners & practices.* *-Acting and speaking like the French.*	Demonstrate an ability: a fluency an expertise confidence ease	Dialogues Role plays Simulations Field experiences	*This is where communicative competence in the language & culture occurs. Students know both what to say and how to do it in a culturally appropriate manner.* ***Teacher Role: Coach or Model***
Knowing Why *discovering explanations*	Values and Assumptions *-Why is food so important to the French?* *-Are you making an observation or an interpretation?* *-Why do the French have such mealtime rituals?* *- How does this compare with your culture?*	Demonstrate an ability to infer to generalize to hypothesize to suspend judgement Curiosity Tolerance Sensitivity Empathy	Learners interpret and make explanations based on above activities Comparisons with their own culture Ethnography Reflective Writing	*Here learners engage in actively using their powers of induction, analysis and intuition to draw conclusions about cultural information or experiences--like anthropologists* ***Teacher Role: Co-researcher/Guide***
Knowing Oneself	Self-Awareness *-What importance does food have in your life?* *-How did it feel to act like the French do at the restaurant?* *- Would you choose to act like this?*	By behavior/statements demonstrate understanding of one's feelings, values, opinions, attitudes and action upon them.	Learners examine and make statements about themselves Reflective Writing Feedback on above activities	*The learners themselves are the subject matter in a process of guided self-discovery, as they study their own values and their reactions to those of the culture. They decide whether or not to change.* ***Teacher Role: Counselor or Guide***

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The culture of a language is an important subject matter for foreign language students. The framework below describes a means for describing culture in terms of what students need to do in order to learn it--their interactions with cultural content. Once these interactions are specified, the learning objectives follow, as do the choice of teaching and learning activities, and the appropriate means of evaluation. Also, each interaction suggests a distinct teacher role.

Language and culture are interrelated, it goes without saying. To separate them is a challenging, if not artificial undertaking. In fact, even to suggest separate categories for culture is to impose an artificial, simplistic system on a complex entity. Nonetheless, the framework is useful in framing the pedagogical challenges and options for teaching culture.

The framework consists of four culture learning interactions:

1. **Culture as Knowing About**
2. **Culture as Knowing How**
3. **Culture as Knowing Why**
4. **Culture as Knowing Oneself**

Culture as KNOWING ABOUT

This category includes all cultural aspects that consist of information--facts, data, pieces of information, knowledge.

Rationale: Learners need to master information about the culture.

Culture as KNOWING HOW

This category includes cultural aspects that consist of skills--actions, doing, participation, behavior, saying, touching, looking, standing. Direct or simulated participation in the everyday life of the people of the target culture, according to their customs and traditions, using their tools or technology, establishing effective relationships with them.

Rationale: Learners need to be able to adapt and/or integrate into the culture--to say and do things in the manner of the people of the culture. This means changing their behaviors to develop others that are appropriate for the culture.

Culture as KNOWING WHY

This aspect deals with coming to an understanding of the basic values, attitudes and assumptions of the culture--the reasons that underlie or permeate all aspects of the culture. The process of learners' structured inquiry into observations, information and experiences with the culture is a critical dimension of learning another culture.

Rationale: Learners need to understand the culture on its own terms. The basic values of a culture are an important point of comparison with the values of the culture of the learners. Students need to develop skills in probing, analyzing, explaining the cultural phenomena they encounter.

Culture as KNOWING ONESELF

This aspect deals with the individual learner--his/her values, opinions, feelings, questions, reactions, thoughts and ideas, his/her own cultural values. It deals with self-awareness.

Rationale: Learners need to understand themselves and their own culture as a means to understanding, adapting to, or integrating into the culture. It is the learners who decide extent to which they accept, explore, or become part of the culture.

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